

755 man, and fastened to the wall, was a strip of bark cloth painted with white circles. These recorded the number of times the patient came for treatment.

278 At Ngalangi there was no difficulty in obtaining information
757 respecting plants used medicinally. Each of three medicine-men returned with a number of roots and stems which they readily described. *Okakamba* and *okapelangalo* are roots that cure "big head." This disease, which is rare in white people, begins with blood blisters in the mouth; these may spread to the intestines and cause death. *Okayenje* is a root that induces vomiting; it is also a purgative to free a patient from worms. *Olutikitiki* is given to a woman soon after her baby is born. *Kalungdumona* is a plant having a purple flower. If the root is pounded and drunk in water it acts as an aperient. *Okumbiasoko*, when pounded and placed on the fire, restores a person after fainting; the head of the patient is held in the smoke. To a violent maniac the root *usonge* is given, pounded in water and mixed with maize beer. At Ngalangi a man who had been subject to homicidal mania was sitting on the ground quietly with his hands tied behind his back. I was informed that *usonge* was making him better. *Ocinyeni* is a bark that is chewed to remedy stomachache. *Kosamba* is a plant used to cure people who fall into the fire; it is also a remedy for toothache. The action of this drug *kosamba* causes vomiting and evacuation.

Cilendaluka is pounded in water and smeared on the patient's body as a treatment following the internal application of *kosamba*. *Mbundakataka* is a root that is pounded and applied externally to cure sores on the lips.

279 In addition to the plants just mentioned the following are important:

Ocimbinga. This plant, whose name means "the big horn," is probably *Strophanthus*. It is used in the treatment of worms and chest colds.

Ocipumbulu. This is a trailing herb whose leaves when pulverized are said to be a cure for bad sores.

Ocindiambala and *olusava*. These are used to give to women who are suffering in difficult delivery. *Ongolo* sometimes takes the place of these drugs. The bark of *ongolo* is pounded in boiling water which is contained in a basin over which the woman sits. Use of the bark in this way is a protection against injuries resulting from childbirth.

Omondolua. This is good for headaches and whooping cough. The roots are boiled and mixed with sweet beer.

Okalolula-lohala. This is said to be used in cases of dysentery. At Elende it is used for curing skin diseases.

Okalle. This is used in cases of snake bite, swellings, and stings.

164 In connection with the foregoing study of the native pharmacopoeia it will be of interest to consider some maladies to which the Ovimbundu

The Ocimbanda.

187

Still

another form of fetish for protection are two small images also known as *ovitekas*. They, like the other *ovitekas* described above, are of wood, but are rudely carved from two round pieces of wood about sixteen inches long. No attempt has been made to represent the human form in any detail, only the face, neck, and arms being indicated. The face of both images has been besmeared with some reddish black pigment. These were placed where the path to the village branches off to the caravan road. A small hut before which they stood was built for them, about two feet square, and between two and three feet high, with a thatched grass roof. Within was a shelf on which from time to time was placed food, corn, and a small gourd of beer. This was done to appease certain spirits which were supposed to be angry with the village and were causing sickness.

For the so-called poison test three medicines are employed. The first and most common is known as the *ombambu*, a drug obtained from the country east of the Quanza River, and represented in the collection by a piece of bark. It has the property of a powerful spinal irritant, and it is said that a very small quantity will produce death. There is a current belief among the Ovimbundu that if a bird alights upon the *ombambu* tree it will fall down dead. The second drug, or *ombambu*, employed in the poison test is obtained from the Bihe country, and is represented by several roots. It is taken in the form of a decoction. The third test is known as *onsunga*. This is a mixture of powdered herbs, and is obtained from the country of the Ganguellas. With these three drugs should be mentioned a small gourd, *okopo*, used by the ocimbanda in mixing the medicines, and from which during the poison test the parties drink. The test medicines are stirred with the foot of a small antelope. Occasion for the administering of the poison may arise in various ways. Frequently one person will accuse another of being a witch. The accused may deny it, and appeal to the poison test to prove his innocence. They go to the chief, who calls an ocimbanda, who mixes up a concoction in a gourd, and both the accuser and accused drink. If the draughts make one sick and he vomits, he is acquitted; and if the other one becomes very sick and does not vomit, he is said to be the witch. This same test is often appealed to in other matters where one affirms and another denies. A man may drink by proxy, that is, he may have a friend drink the poison in his stead, or, more frequently, a slave drinks for his master.

Finally, it must be noticed that the ocimbandu is also a medicine-man. He undoubtedly possesses some really valuable remedies, but there is so much of the fetishistic cult bound up in the administering of the remedies that when they do help a person the credit of

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